

DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN TO “DOUBLE THE NUMBERS” OF D.C. HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS GRADUATING FROM COLLEGE

Background

In October 2006, then-Mayor Anthony Williams, State Education Officer Deborah Gist, and District of Columbia Public Schools Superintendent Clifford B. Janey presented “Double the Numbers for College Success: A Call to Action for the District of Columbia” (DTN). The report drew attention to the startling numbers of District students who never make it through college, serving as a call to action to the community to take the necessary steps to improve college success.

The purpose of the initiative is to double the number of District of Columbia high school students successfully completing college. Based on extensive research by The Bridgespan Group, the report was the culmination of over a year of work by the Double the Numbers Coalition (Coalition), made up of the following entities: DC College Access Program, DC Education Compact, DC Public Schools, and DC State Education Office (SEO), supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Mayor’s Office

As founding member of the DTN Coalition, the Mayor’s Office through the SEO has led the leveraging of public and private partners for a successful implementation of the DTN recommendations. The SEO and the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education are committed to jointly ensuring that more District students graduate from high school, enroll in post secondary education, and graduate with a baccalaureate degree in a timely fashion.

On March 14, the Deputy Mayor for Education and State Education Officer met jointly with the Consortium of Universities to discuss strategies to support improving the college success rates of District of Columbia residents.

Progress

The Coalition has been making progress towards implementing the ten recommendations outlined in the DTN report. Specifically, the Coalition has developed six workgroups that are developing action plans with benchmarks to make the DTN recommendations a reality:

- ✓ On March 22, Mayor Fenty and the DTN Coalition announced a \$122 million dollar investment from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to support the efforts of public schools in the District of Columbia to increase the college graduation rates of students attending these schools. About 2,000 students will be named "D.C. Achievers" over the next 15 years and will receive scholarships of up to \$50,000 over five years.

- ✓ DC College Success Foundation was established to lead the DTN Coalition. DC College Success Foundation has begun convening college access programs and aligning them with the DTN goals. The Foundation will provide additional scholarship funding for District students.
- ✓ The Coalition identified goals and six work groups for the initiative. Work groups are currently developing work plans, which will be completed by April 11.
- ✓ The Coalition has partnered with KnowHow2Go, a national multi-media campaign designed to encourage low-income and first-generation students to take the steps necessary to go to college. A DC-specific media campaign will be released shortly.

Next Steps:

- The six DTN workgroups will be holding a day-long workshop on April 11 to discuss short-term and long-term action plans.
- The DTN coalition is working on a media campaign that will help students, as young as middle school, and their families understand the steps needed to prepare both academically and financially for college.

DTN Revised Work Group Overview

Goals	Work Groups	Leads* and Key Players
Create environment for reform	1. Raise awareness about issues of college completion in DC and mobilize resources around a specific plan for initiating and sustaining change. Provide support to policies and policymakers that reinforce the DTN strategy.	DCEC-Juanita Wade*, SEO, DCPS, DC-CAP, CYITC, GMMB, CSF, Consortium
Increase the number of college-ready high school graduates	2. Assist with implementation of secondary school transformation strategy (especially Master Education Plan), with focus on college readiness. Link with JAG-DC proposal and similar efforts aimed at serving struggling and out-of-school youth.	DCPS-Dan Gohl*, JAG, BMGF, CSF, DCEC, America's Choice, DC-CAP, Consortium
Improve post-secondary transitions	3. Empower teachers, counselors, and principals to assist students/families with college access by providing PD, reorienting counseling function, and providing better information about college choices. Scale effective college access programs, especially those that focus on remediation and improving student/college connections.	CSF-Herb Tillery and DCPS, SEO, DC-CAP, Charter Schools, CSF, , JAG, Springboard, BMGF
Increase college persistence	4. Foster adoption of best practices for retaining low-income students at cluster colleges, with focus on UDC. Expand PSE options by creating new cluster colleges and improving the 2-year college pathway	SEO-Eurmon Hervey and John Parham*, Mayor's Office, CSF, DC-CAP, DCPS, UDC, Consortium, Colleges and Universities
Create supports for reform	5. Create CSF as an umbrella organization to coordinate & fund nonprofits for maximum effect. Close financing gap through major investment in DC Achievers and by maximizing available aid. Supplement current JAG funding.	CSF-Herb Tillery*, BMGF, DCPS, DC-CAP, CYITC, SEO
	6. Create a P-16 data tracking and dissemination function to improve information flow and accountability	SEO-Glenda Partee*, DCPS, Charter Schools, College Consortium, Mayor's Office